

MSDL Board Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2023 @ 7:30 PM

ZOOM meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM by the president, Greg Cunningham

Board Members in attendance

Joyce Albert, Joe Bowden, Scott Caron, Josh Cohen, Greg Cunningham, Sue Hennessey, Lisa Honeyman, Jim Honeyman, Sheryl Kaczmarek, Tammie Ruda, Chris Sheldon, and PJ Wexler

1. Debrief States

According to Jim (treasurer): We came close to breaking even when it came to States.

DEBATE

Things went well at Debate States. Running 2 rounds on Friday night went well. It would have been nice to finish up on Saturday, but in order to make breaks to out-rounds as fair as possible, running finals on Sunday was important. The only issue was that we couldn't admit everyone who wanted to watch finals into the room. If we tried to squeeze finals in on Saturday, it may have been hard to find judges who would have been at their best in the final round. The energy in the room was great on Saturday this time and on Sunday there were *a lot* of folks "there" to watch.

It might be a nice idea to have someone (maybe a board member) pull together a panel of alumni judges or visiting 'dignitaries' to judge finals. Maybe offer a small stipend? A job for someone other than the Chair of Debate - who has a lot of other things to handle in regards to States. (It would be great if these folks could be recruited before the week of States.)

Next Year - Awards

- Be sure to order Big Questions trophies with other trophies.
- If we are going to give Octos medals for PFD, then we should get them for LD. (We will order medals for this year's Octo-finalists in LD).

SPEECH

Things went well in Speech, too. Judges were on top of their assignments. The facility worked out fine. We had plenty of rooms.

Next Year - Awards

- Remember double-entry awards
- Sweepstakes down to 10 (instead of 5) is meaningful for smaller programs. Let's consider returning to 10 next year.

2. Annual meeting

2023-2024 Schedule

Sanctioning requests are still coming in.
Speech States: Likely April 6, 2024
Debate States: Likely March 23, 2024
(Easter is March 31, 2024).

Entry fees

With lower numbers of entries and higher expenses, many host schools are asking about charging more for entry next year. This year has been \$7 per speech entry, LD has been \$15 per student and \$15 per PFD pair, Maybe next year we move to \$10 per speech entry and \$20 per PFD pair? We need to discuss fees at the annual meeting.

NSDA Novice LD topic

We (the MSDL) need to decide if we will adopt the new NSDA Novice LD topic. We don't know what it is at the moment, so it's hard to make a recommendation about that. We should collaborate with the rest of the Northeast on our decision. (NY, NJ and MA do a lot together.)

Congressional Debate Changes

Joe is working on making some changes to congressional debate. He is working with PJ and Sarah D. and will have something to share later in the week.

If anyone has anything else for the Annual Meeting, send those agenda items to Greg by Friday (April 14).

Discussion of Community Standards

We talked about logistics - how to make it possible to run Zoom for folks who want to join the meeting from elsewhere.

3. At-large members for next board (Amanda)

The newly-elected Board usually meets to select At-Large members right after the annual meeting. Amanda wanted to be sure people who were interested have time to self-nominate so that we can cast our net more widely in terms of folks who may be interested. She is going to put out a note inviting coaches to self-nominate via a Google form.

- We tend to meet monthly via Zoom
- It is a norm that board members attend a majority of tournaments.
- The board contributes to endeavors such as writing extemp questions, impromptu prompts, group topics, preparing radio copy etc. People should indicate what they might want to work on while being on the board.
- If someone wants to nominate someone else, they should notify Amanda and we can reach out to see if the potential nominee is interested in running.

- The term is 2 years long

4. Community standards (Scott & Chris)

The Massachusetts Speech and Debate League affirms and upholds the following values and standards and expects those who take part in our tournaments to do the same:

Inclusivity and Equity

We, the MSDL community, welcome people associating with any intersection(s) of identity and uphold that all members of our community deserve respect. We are made stronger by embracing the differences of our members.

Dignity and Safety

We believe that the welfare and dignity of our community members must be protected and preserved. In practice, this means that all community members (coaches, students, judges, and observers) will be mindful of the impact and consequences of their words and actions. We share responsibility to act with the intention to protect the well-being of others.

Integrity and Honesty

All members of our MSDL community must conduct themselves honorably, and must scrupulously compete within the rules of our events while promoting our community standards.

Collegiality and Fun

We enjoy and support each other even while being serious about competition.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- We plan to share this document with our members at the Annual Meeting to get feedback.
- We will decide at a later point how this will be shared, implemented, etc.
- We recognize that our Community Standards document is a living, breathing document, not a final statement.

5. New Business

We recommend that the next board form a sub-committee to take a close look at our Bylaws as well as the Rules & Regulations document, with an eye towards updating references to gender and other wording issues.

Motion to adjourn: Shelden

2nd: Cohen

Passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Honeyman

Clerk/Secretary

